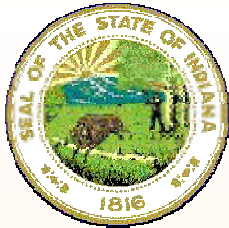


# STATE SENATOR KAREN TALLIAN



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For complete bill information  
and committee hearing dates,  
visit the General Assembly's  
web site at:  
[www.in.gov/legislative/](http://www.in.gov/legislative/)

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*Dear Friends:*

*I would like to say what a great honor it is to have been recently elected to serve as your State Senator. As a long-time resident of Northwest Indiana, I care deeply about the many issues facing us. I look forward to representing the citizens of Senate District 4 and working with you, community leaders and my colleagues in the legislature to make Indiana a better place to live, work and raise a family.*

*The Senate will convene January 9th for the short session of this General Assembly and, by law, must conclude business by March 14th. Included in this newsletter is a brief survey on some of the important issues that may be considered. I hope you will take time to share your views with me and either return the survey by mail or access my Senate web site at [www.IN.gov/S4](http://www.IN.gov/S4) to complete the survey on line. Your response and additional comments are important for me to know.*

*Feel free to contact me by mail, phone or email to express your thoughts and concerns on pending legislation or if I can provide assistance to you. I look forward to hearing from you.*

*Wishing you a joyous holiday season and a healthy New Year!*



# Regional Development Authority

As we head into 2006, residents of Northwest Indiana must build upon what has been started for a unified transportation system.

The creation last year of the Northwest Indiana Regional Development Authority (RDA) was a huge step forward in working to revitalize our region's economy. A multi-county unified transportation system will serve as an economic driver for our area of the state and has the potential to produce new economic development opportunities, thousands of jobs and tremendous growth.

However, to fully achieve this goal, we must continue to lay the foundation for our future success. We must work

to ensure that all residents benefit from the RDA and that all communities in Lake, Porter and possibly LaPorte counties are able to participate.

We must also make sure that the region's workforce has the proper training to acquire the necessary skills required so we can best capitalize on the opportunities presented to us.

With legislation that I will be working on this session to address the region's workforce needs, we will take the next step in making our area of the state that which most justifies its nickname—*The Crossroads of America*.

## Privatization

### *Should the state be moving in this direction?*

Change was expected upon the arrival of the new administration last January. In some cases, change may be needed, but a trend has emerged that is disturbing for many Hoosiers. The new buzz word is *privatization*.

Several areas of state government have already been handed over to private companies including the food service for all state prisons and the operation of the New Castle correctional facility. State hospitals, which care for some of our most vulnerable Hoosiers, have also been slotted for privatization, along with Indiana's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Food Stamp and Medicaid programs. This administration is also exploring whether to allow private businesses to log in our state forests, operate the inns at our state parks and take control of the I-80/90 Toll Road.

Privatization raises many concerns. Out-of-state companies are awarded huge state contracts, but despite the fact that these contracts are paid for by our tax dollars there is virtually no public oversight of their performance. These businesses are not required to follow the same open record laws as state agencies.

When state government privatizes certain functions, the quality and eligibility of those that need services may be diminished. The public has no idea how the programs are operating, the number of people who are getting services or the amount of compensation that company executives are receiving in salaries and benefits. It is hard to see how the public can be assured that its tax dollars are being used wisely unless there is total accountability. In addition, we know that privatizing such things as welfare has failed in other states like Wisconsin and Colorado.

Instead of trying to fix problems from within state agencies, the governor has instead chosen to take risks through privatization. Countless state employees may lose their jobs or be forced to take positions with new private contractors, at lower wages, with fewer or no benefits.

This is a serious issue with potential for a major impact on thousands of Hoosiers. With the governor's propensity to lean toward privatization, it is likely that legislation will be offered calling for a review of any plans to turn over control of state services to private vendors.

## Serve as a Student Page

Serving as a Page for a day with the Indiana General Assembly is an excellent educational opportunity for students.

- Students between the ages of 12 and 18 are eligible to apply.
- Students can participate for one day assisting with various legislative activities.
- Being a Page for a day is an excused absence from school.
- Interested students should write, call or email the Senator. Please refer to the contact information listed on this newsletter.
- Include your full name, address, phone number, age, school and two different dates you are available to serve.
- The '06 session begins January 9th and will continue through March 14th. The Senate is normally in session on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays.

For further information, contact the Senate Student Services Office at 800-382-9467, ext. 2-9410.



**You may also complete this survey on-line at [www.in.gov/S4](http://www.in.gov/S4)**

**Feel free to have another family member respond to questions in column #2.**

**Respondent  
#1**

**Respondent  
#2**

1. Do you support further expansion of full-day kindergarten to provide all children with the opportunity to get a good start on their education?
2. Do you support the implementation of new local sales and/or income taxes if this would reduce property taxes?
3. Do you support the awarding of contracts to allow out-of-state companies to operate certain state government services and programs?
4. Do you support the sale or long-term lease of the I-80/90 Toll Road?
5. Do you support the addition of more toll roads in Indiana?
6. Do you support legislation that would require an appropriate waiting period and background check for all legal gun purchases?
7. Do you support legislation to protect the waters and shoreline of Lake Michigan from pollution and erosion?
8. Do you support an increase in the current \$5.15 per hour minimum wage?
9. Do you support the state giving local units of government the option to consolidate various government functions at their own discretion?
10. What do you believe are the most pressing issues facing the State of Indiana? (Please rank 1 through 5 with 1 being the most important.)

1. Support ☐ Oppose ☐

1. Support ☐ Oppose ☐

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Education  
Environmental protection  
Property tax relief  
Health care access and affordability  
Job creation and retention

PLEASE COMPLETE, DETACH HERE, FOLD, ADD POSTAGE, & RETURN.

**Additional Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this survey. Your opinions are very important to me!**



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## Connecting with you

Personal contact with constituents has a direct impact on the legislation we consider and what ultimately becomes law. In ongoing efforts to connect more efficiently, for those of you who have email access, I will be offering periodic email updates on issues facing the Indiana General Assembly. If you would like to receive these updates, please provide your email address below.

Email address: (please print clearly)

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Or subscribe online now at [www.IN.gov/S4](http://www.IN.gov/S4)

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**Tallian '06 Legislative Survey Response**

Please tape or staple here. Thank you.